

Testimony Concerning SB 253
Tara Shepherd
Blind Dog Rescue Alliance, Inc.

I would like to thank the Environmental Committee for the opportunity to express my concerns on SB253, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Animal Importation Statutes

I am a registered voter in Seymour, and I am a board member, transportation coordinator, adoption coordinator and former foster home for Blind Dog Rescue Alliance.

I have been involved in Blind Dog Rescue Alliance for over 2 years now. In that time we have saved close to 200 dogs across the country, a few are from Connecticut and several have been adopted to wonderful loving homes in Connecticut. I also adopted my dog, a former resident of Tennessee, in Connecticut.

The aim of the original law was a justified and necessary goal, I've heard more than my fair share of horror stories the past two years. However, the burden the law places on rescues is financially more than most rescues can afford, certainly more than Blind Dog Rescue Alliance can afford. We have had to cease operations in Connecticut due to the costs of multiple vet visits within a very short time frame.

A vet visit within 48 hours of a dog entering a foster home requires the dog be taken into a public venue before a sufficient quarantine period has ended. In addition 48 hours does not provide a sufficient incubation period to show most of the contagions the law is aiming to limit. The multiple vet visits while a dog is in foster care to verify the dog is still healthy just to be seen again right before adoption is redundant. Requiring multiple checkups for a healthy dog waste foster homes and vets valuable and limited times while exposing healthy dogs to canine diseases unnecessarily. The multiple vet visits does not protect Connecticut consumers anymore than a health certificate to enter the state and a second visit within 2 weeks of adoption would.

As a Connecticut Consumer I appreciate the aim of the original law, however as a rescue volunteer and a dog owner the reality is unrealistic. The law as it currently stands will only serve to kill more dogs who would otherwise have loving homes in Connecticut. Without the ability to rescue dogs that fit within a family's structure and desire, more dogs will be purchased from breeders and stores who do not work towards the best fit but rather the highest dollar.

Please change the law to require a health certificate to enter the state and a vet visit within 2 weeks of adoption. This will save more dogs while still providing a equal level of protection to Connecticut consumers.

Thank you,
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